



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Sixty-one Migrants Held Hostage In Locked Garage

Suspected smugglers arrested at the scene

LOS ANGELES—Early this morning Special Agents from the Anti-Smuggling Unit of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) responded to a call for assistance from the Los Angeles Police Department regarding a possible alien smuggling case. When the INS agents arrived on the scene they discovered 61 smuggled aliens locked in a garage located at 6227 S. Hoover St. in Los Angeles.

LAPD officers also arrested five people believed to be the alien smugglers. One of the five had been outside the garage acting as a lookout, another was in the garage guarding the victims, and three others were inside the residence on the property. The five were turned over to the INS.

The smuggled aliens, all from Mexico, told INS agents that they had been brought to the house early on Wednesday, March 21. They are currently being processed at the INS office in downtown Los Angeles.

"This latest incident illustrates the fact that smuggling has become an increasingly ruthless and violent enterprise," said Thomas J. Schiltgen, Director of the INS Los Angeles District. "Smugglers routinely victimize their clients, but their actions take a toll on more than just the aliens they abuse, they threaten the lives, the livelihoods and the integrity of our communities."

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